

# News Release

## Twenty-Seven High Schools and Two Career Centers Partner with Dream It. Do It. Southeast Indiana

*Collaborative campaign opens students' eyes to well-paying manufacturing opportunities*

*Columbus, Indiana, September, 2014-* Twenty-Seven Southeast Indiana high schools and two career centers have partnered with the Dream It. Do It. (DIDI) Southeast Indiana campaign as a part of a regional recruitment strategy sponsored by Economic Opportunities through Education (EcO<sub>15</sub>), which aims to develop and implement marketing strategies to recruit more students to high schools and post-secondary programs that lead to high-demand, well-paying manufacturing careers.

The EcO<sub>15</sub> regional network and twenty-nine DIDI "Champions" (high school educators/counselors) recruit 58 Student Ambassadors annually to assist in expansion of the initiative and help with marketing the refreshed multi-media DIDI campaign. EcO<sub>15</sub> relies on each of the Champions in Southeast Indiana to provide and receive information on manufacturing related activity in their community/school, including increasing manufacturing related course enrollments. Local DIDI Student Ambassadors from the EcO<sub>15</sub> ten-county region serve as advocates for manufacturing careers and the 'faces' of the campaign. Student Ambassadors help to recruit middle school students into the high school Project Lead The Way (PLTW) pre-engineering, project-based learning curriculum, as well as HIRE Technology, and targeted Career and Technical Education skilled trades courses.

Activities include but are not limited to: Career fairs, college fairs, career interest assessments, parent activities, teacher activities (externships, career conferences) and business activities (speakers, plant visits, internships).



To date (2013-14 school year), Dream It. Do It. regional activities conducted have exposed **143,838 students, 6,608 educators and 25,318 parents (total of 175,000+ people)** in the ten county region to Advanced Manufacturing/STEM as a top-tier career choice!

In June, the Region 9 Works Council and EcO<sub>15</sub> were awarded a \$65,000 outreach grant by the Center for Education and Career Innovation to provide additional funding to support targeted promotional

career awareness activities focused on skilled trades and technician pathways utilizing the EcO<sub>15</sub> and DIDI champion network.

Each of the 27 high schools and two career centers participating in the DIDI campaign will receive this funding to aid in manufacturing and STEM career awareness outreach

activities. These activities will be facilitated by the Champion and Student Ambassadors at each participating school.

Around 120 educators and students used Monday to get a head-start by participating in EcO<sub>15</sub>'s annually sponsored Dream It. Do It. learning conference at the Clarion Hotel in Columbus.

A group of student ambassadors helped develop the agenda and activities for the training session. The events included a speed sharing segment, in which student ambassadors and Champions formed into groups and then networked with other schools from throughout the region, switching every ten minutes to share best practices, as well as the development of outreach activities and a work plan with the help of a few regional industry partners.



Carla Enzinger and Brett Hofer of Batesville Tool & Die, Steve Mackey of Cummins Inc., and Kent Fuller of Caltherm, joined this group of Champions and Student Ambassadors to help each school begin to plan plant tours, classroom presentations, career fairs, etc.

Steve Mackey, Southern Indiana Placement Services- Learning and Development Leader with Cummins Inc, said, "This program is important because students don't always have access to stimuli that encourages interest in STEM careers beyond medicine or electronics. When I was younger things were easier. We had everything from the astronauts, space programs, and the race to the moon to something as simple as finding an old lawnmower engine to tear down and try to put back together. It seems that the technology that is available today is so advanced and entertaining it somewhat limits a student's imagination. The need for a student to ask why, how and can I make it better has been replaced by the technology that they have at their disposal.

Cummins supports STEM careers because they require creative thought and ingenuity. It is the foundation of what has made our company great, and what is needed to keep our community, region and nation competitive now and in the future. Dream It. Do It. is a

program that in its' name causes a student to think about the "What if?" then make it happen."

"We have been provided an extraordinary gift in Southeast Indiana with the amount of manufacturer's hiring when many other Regions of the country are not as fortunate. The amount of manufacturing jobs is projected to reach over 5,000 by 2018 in Southeast Indiana.

These openings bring opportunities with a definite need not only to provide the talent to fill these openings, but also to replace those who are leaving the manufacturing workforce to retire. It is very exciting to see the enthusiasm of these students collaborating to establish strategies to get the word out about the high-demand and well-paying manufacturing careers. The partnership with the twenty-seven high schools, two Career Centers and Dream It. Do It. has united the business sector to assist in playing a much more active role in conveying manufacturing career needs not only in the present but for the future. This universal partnership approach supports the targeted career awareness focused on skilled trades and technician pathways utilizing EcO<sub>15</sub> and DIDI champions. It is an exciting time with well-paying manufacturing opportunities across Southeast Indiana," said Kent Fuller, Human Resources Manager at Caltherm.

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For more information regarding the EcO<sub>15</sub> initiative, please visit [www.eco15.org](http://www.eco15.org).

For more information regarding the Dream It. Do It. Southeast Indiana initiative, please visit [www.eco15.org/didi](http://www.eco15.org/didi).